

An Analysis of Polish Politics and Foreign Policy in 2025: Navigating a New Era of Executive Division

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Executive Summary

The political landscape of Poland in 2025 is defined by a deep and persistent polarization that has culminated in a state of political cohabitation. This institutional arrangement, where the national-conservative President Karol Nawrocki coexists with the liberal-conservative, pro-European government led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk, creates a fundamental legislative and political impasse. The president's constitutional power to veto legislation, coupled with the government's lack of a supermajority to override such vetoes, ensures that key reform agendas—particularly on the judiciary, social policy, and EU-related matters—will face significant, if not insurmountable, hurdles. This report provides a detailed analysis of the leading political parties, key personalities, and the effects of their actions on Polish society and economy.

While the political sphere is mired in institutional conflict, the Polish economy demonstrates remarkable resilience. Buoyed by robust private consumption and the unlocking of significant EU funds, the economy is projected to achieve strong GDP growth and moderate inflation in 2025 and 2026. This positive economic trajectory exists despite the political turmoil, indicating that investors view the political conflict as a contained, institutional struggle rather than a systemic risk. The Tusk government's ability to leverage EU funds, a direct consequence of its policy of re-engagement with Brussels, provides it with a powerful economic tool that the presidency cannot block.

In foreign policy, the new executive division creates a bifurcated approach. The Tusk government maintains Poland's pro-EU and pro-Ukraine stance, while President Nawrocki's Euroscepticism and pro-Trump allegiances introduce a new variable. This could lead to mixed signals on the international stage, particularly on the long-term integration of Ukraine with the West. The rise of the far-right Confederation further complicates this dynamic, as its radical agenda influences mainstream conservative politics. The path forward for Poland is likely to be one of continued political friction, with the next parliamentary election in 2027 serving as a crucial test of whether the country will remain split or if one of the two dominant political camps can achieve a decisive victory.

1. Introduction: The New Political Landscape of Poland

1.1 A Brief Overview of Poland's Constitutional Framework

Poland operates as a unitary semi-presidential constitutional republic.¹ Under this system, executive power is shared between two main figures: the President, who serves as the head of state, and the Prime Minister, who leads the government as head of government.¹ The legislative branch is bicameral, consisting of the Sejm (the lower house) and the Senate (the upper house).¹ Members of the Sejm are elected for a four-year term through a system of proportional representation with a 5% electoral threshold for non-ethnic-minority parties, ensuring that only significant political forces gain representation.¹

A critical element of this constitutional framework, particularly relevant to the current political climate, is the scope of the President's powers. As the supreme commander of the Armed Forces and the highest representative of the Republic of Poland, the president holds the right to veto legislation passed by parliament.¹ This veto can be overridden, but it requires a three-fifths majority vote in the Sejm.¹ The president also has the authority to refer legislation to the Constitutional Tribunal to assess its conformity with the constitution.⁴ This framework, particularly the presidential veto, is a direct mechanism for legislative paralysis when the presidency and the government are not politically aligned. The current government, a coalition led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk, does not command the three-fifths majority needed to overturn a presidential veto, placing its entire legislative agenda at the mercy of the opposing political camp.⁴ This structural conflict is the core issue that will define Polish politics for the foreseeable future.

1.2 The Shift from Unified Rule to Political Cohabitation

For eight years, from 2015 to 2023, Poland's political system was characterized by a period of unified rule, where the national-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party controlled both the government and the presidency, with their ally Andrzej Duda serving as head of state.³ This era ended in October 2023, when a new coalition led by Donald Tusk's Civic Coalition (KO) came to power.⁴ The stage was set for a fundamental change in Poland's political direction,

with the Tusk government committed to restoring the rule of law and re-engaging with the European Union.⁶

The 2025 presidential election, however, upended this narrative. With President Duda constitutionally barred from seeking a third term, the race was viewed as a critical referendum on the Tusk government's mandate.³ In the second-round run-off, Karol Nawrocki, a candidate backed by the main opposition PiS party, narrowly defeated Rafał Trzaskowski of the Civic Platform with 50.89% of the vote.³ This outcome, which reversed pre-election polling trends, was a significant blow to the Tusk government and its plans to unblock the political system.³ Nawrocki's victory and his subsequent inauguration on 6 August 2025 initiated a new era of "cohabitation," where a national-conservative president coexists with a liberal-conservative, pro-European government.⁷ This arrangement is the central theme of this report and a primary driver of the political friction in Poland today. Following the election result, Prime Minister Tusk's decision to call a confidence vote in the Sejm was a high-risk political move to demonstrate his government's continued mandate, a vote which he successfully won, but which did not resolve the fundamental issue of the presidential veto.⁴ The razor-thin margin of Nawrocki's victory, coupled with an exceptionally high voter turnout of 71.63%, underscores the deep and hardening polarization that continues to define Poland's society.⁷

2. Key Political Parties and Ideological Divides

2.1 The Governing Coalition: Civic Coalition and its Partners

The current Polish government is a broad and ideologically diverse coalition, with the Civic Coalition (KO) at its core.⁴ KO, founded by and led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk's Civic Platform (PO), represents a liberal-conservative political stance.⁴ This political grouping is allied with several other parties, including Polska 2050 (Poland 2050), The Left (Lewica), and the Polish People's Party (PSL).⁴ The primary, unifying purpose of this coalition was to remove the Law and Justice party from power.¹¹

The internal composition of this alliance, however, is a source of its inherent fragility. The coalition is composed of parties with disparate ideological positions, from the agrarian conservatism of the PSL to the social-democratic stances of The Left.¹⁰ This ideological diversity prevents the government from presenting a unified legislative front on key issues, particularly those related to social policy. For example, the PSL, a crucial partner in the

coalition, opposes the liberalization of abortion laws and civil partnerships, a position that directly conflicts with the stated agenda of the government's more progressive members.¹² This internal dissent and the lack of a common vision on social policy weaken the coalition's ability to govern effectively and provide opportunities for the opposition to exploit these internal fractures. The resulting political paralysis is therefore not solely due to the new presidential veto, but is compounded by the governing coalition's own internal contradictions.

2.2 The Main Opposition: Law and Justice (PiS)

Despite losing its governing majority in the October 2023 parliamentary election, the Law and Justice (PiS) party remains the largest single party in the Sejm.⁴ Its ideology is fundamentally national-conservative, with a strong emphasis on traditional Polish values, national sovereignty, and Euroscepticism.⁷ The party's political strategy following its electoral defeat has been to use the presidency as a means to prolong its political influence and obstruct the Tusk government's agenda.⁷

The election of Karol Nawrocki, a formal independent candidate who was staunchly backed by PiS, represents the successful execution of this strategy.⁴ Nawrocki's victory ensures that PiS effectively retains a crucial branch of government, despite being in opposition.³ This political arrangement allows the party to act as a permanent check on the government's legislative initiatives through the use of the presidential veto.³ This demonstrates a sophisticated, long-term approach to maintaining power and relevance, setting the stage for a potential return to a governing role in the next parliamentary election, scheduled for 2027.⁷ Nawrocki, a historian and a new face in politics, serves as a standard-bearer for the national-conservative movement, and his presidency provides a platform for the PiS political project to continue to define the public discourse.⁸

2.3 The Rise of the Far-Right: The Confederation and its Influence

A significant development in the Polish political landscape is the rising influence of the far-right. The Confederation Liberty and Independence (Konfederacja) is a political force positioned on the far-right, combining an economically liberal platform with socially conservative and Polish nationalist stances.¹³ Its agenda includes radical positions such as anti-EU rhetoric, calls for the elimination of income tax, opposition to immigration and the EU's refugee resettlement program, and socially conservative views on issues like abortion

and LGBTQ+ rights.¹³

The influence of the Confederation was demonstrably significant in the 2025 presidential election.³ The first round of the election saw candidates described as "far right" gaining substantial votes, with the Confederation's voters emerging as a crucial bloc in the second-round run-off.³ Commentators widely attribute Karol Nawrocki's narrow victory to his ability to secure the support of these voters.⁸ This was achieved, in part, by Nawrocki pledging support for some of the demands issued by the third-placed candidate, Sławomir Mentzen of the Confederation.³ This includes an anti-European Green Deal stance and opposition to Ukraine's accession to NATO and the EU.⁴ The success of the Confederation demonstrates a notable shift to the right in Polish society, particularly among younger demographics.⁷ The party's ability to act as a kingmaker and influence the agenda of the mainstream right is a critical development that shapes the entire political discourse in Poland.

Table 1: Key Figures in Poland's Executive Branch (2025)

Role	Name	Party/Affiliation	Since
President	Karol Nawrocki	Independent (Law and Justice)	6 August 2025 ¹
Prime Minister	Donald Tusk	Civic Platform	13 December 2023 ¹
Deputy Prime Minister	Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz	Polish People's Party	13 December 2023 ¹
Deputy Prime Minister	Krzysztof Gawkowski	The Left	13 December 2023 ¹
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Radosław Sikorski	Civic Platform	13 December 2023 ¹
Minister of Finance	Andrzej Domański	Civic Platform	13 December 2023 ¹⁵
Minister of Justice	Waldemar Żurek	(Not specified)	13 December 2023 ¹⁵

Table 2: Major Political Parties and Their Ideological Platforms

Party/Coalition	Leader	Ideological Stance	Position on EU	Position on Domestic Social Issues	Economic Position
Civic Coalition (KO)	Donald Tusk	Liberal-conservative, pro-European	Pro-integration, aims to restore relations and unlock EU funds	Pro-LGBTQ + rights, pro-choice (with internal dissent) ⁴	Focus on business deregulation, investment, and tech ¹⁶
Law and Justice (PiS)	Jarosław Kaczyński	National-conservative, populist	Eurosceptic, emphasizes national sovereignty and traditional values ⁷	Socially conservative, opposes abortion liberalization and LGBTQ+ rights ⁴	Championed social spending, aims to lessen dependence on foreign capital ¹⁷
Confederation	Sławomir Mentzen	Far-right, libertarian	Anti-EU, advocates for Poland's exit ¹³	Socially conservative, opposes abortion liberalization, LGBTQ+ rights ¹³	Economically liberal, advocates for low taxes and reduction in welfare spending ¹³

3. Leading Personalities and their Impact

3.1 Prime Minister Donald Tusk: The Pragmatist Reformer

Prime Minister Donald Tusk is a veteran Polish politician, with a notable background as a co-founder of the Civic Platform (PO) and a prior tenure as Poland's prime minister from 2007 to 2014.⁶ His international experience as President of the European Council from 2014 to 2019 positioned him as a respected pro-European statesman.⁶ His political return to Poland in 2023 was framed by a clear mandate: to improve the rule of law and restore Poland's relations with the European Union, which had deteriorated under the previous PiS government.⁶

Tusk's government has actively pursued this agenda, evidenced by its judicial reform efforts and a comprehensive six-pillar economic plan aimed at leveraging EU funds to spur growth.¹⁶ However, the election of President Karol Nawrocki presents a significant contradiction to Tusk's political persona as a leader capable of decisive reform. While Tusk successfully won a vote of confidence to reaffirm his government's mandate, the victory did not resolve the fundamental issue of the presidential veto.⁴ The current cohabitation makes it exceedingly difficult for the Tusk government to deliver on its core promises of judicial and social reform, as any such legislation passed by the Sejm is likely to be blocked by the presidency.³ Tusk's political skill will now be tested not in passing legislation, but in navigating this institutional impasse and in convincing the public he can still govern effectively while preparing for the 2027 parliamentary election.

3.2 President Karol Nawrocki: The National-Conservative Standard-Bearer

Karol Nawrocki is the newly elected President of Poland, having taken office on 6 August 2025.¹ His rise to the presidency is notable as he is not a professional politician by trade, but a historian and the former president of the Institute of National Remembrance.⁴ Despite running as an independent candidate, Nawrocki had the full backing of the national-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party, a fact that cements his role as the new figurehead for the Polish right.⁴

Nawrocki's campaign was built on a platform of national sovereignty, a focus on conservative values, and a confrontational attitude towards the Tusk government and the European Union.⁷ He campaigned on explicitly Eurosceptic attitudes, promoting an antagonistic narrative that portrayed the EU as an entity attempting to curtail Polish sovereignty and subordinate Poland to Brussels and Berlin.⁷ This view is in stark contrast to the Tusk government's pro-EU stance. Furthermore, Nawrocki presented himself as an ally of US President Donald Trump, a position that earned him a meeting with Trump in the Oval Office before the election.³ Nawrocki's election signals the potential for a bifurcated Polish foreign policy. While the Tusk government

is focused on re-engagement with the EU and maintaining bipartisan support in the United States, Nawrocki's personal allegiances and his role as head of state could create a dual diplomatic track, sending mixed signals to international partners and potentially leading to internal friction on matters of foreign cooperation and security.

3.3 Other Influential Figures: Ministers and Opposition Leaders

Beyond the two heads of state, several other figures hold significant influence in the current political landscape. Radosław Sikorski, a Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is a highly respected voice in Washington, able to navigate the corridors of power and ensure Poland remains a crucial ally to the US and NATO.⁸ His presence provides a measure of continuity and stability in Poland's foreign relations, despite the potential for friction with the presidency.⁹

Andrzej Domański, the Minister of Finance, is central to the Tusk government's economic strategy. He has been a key figure in presenting the government's economic development plan, focusing on a record-breaking investment target and a projected increase in GDP growth.¹⁶ Justice Minister Adam Bodnar is at the forefront of the government's attempts to reform the judiciary and restore the rule of law, a process that is now institutionally blocked by the presidential veto.¹⁸ On the opposition side, Sławomir Mentzen, one of the leaders of the far-right Confederation, has demonstrated his ability to influence the political agenda. His campaign for president and the subsequent support his voters gave to Nawrocki show that even without a formal position of power, he can dictate policy positions and push the mainstream right further to the extreme.³

4. Domestic Policy and its Societal Effects

4.1 The Impasse over Judicial Reform: The Veto, the Tribunal, and the Rule of Law

A central promise of the Tusk government was to restore the rule of law and judicial independence, a move critical to unlocking frozen EU funds.⁶ Justice Minister Adam Bodnar

has spearheaded this effort, proposing a series of reforms that include depoliticizing the National Council of the Judiciary (NCJ), amending the structure of the Supreme Court to strengthen its independence, and separating the functions of the Minister of Justice and the Prosecutor-General.¹⁸

However, the political cohabitation dynamic ensures that this reform agenda will face a permanent and likely insurmountable legislative impasse. Before his term ended, the outgoing president, Andrzej Duda, repeatedly blocked key judicial bills, either by vetoing them or by referring them to the PiS-aligned Constitutional Tribunal for review.³ This pattern is expected to continue with President Nawrocki, who has already used his veto four times in his first month in office and indicated he will take a tough stance on the Tusk government's judicial reforms.²¹ The Tusk government, lacking the three-fifths majority in the Sejm needed to override a presidential veto, is institutionally blocked from enacting these changes. The political will to reform exists within the government, but the constitutional framework, combined with the opposing presidency, perpetuates the conflict with the EU and prevents the full disbursement of critical funds. The political battle has shifted from a debate over policy to a struggle for institutional control.

4.2 Navigating Social Divides: The Stalemate on Abortion and LGBTQ+ Rights

Social issues, particularly abortion and LGBTQ+ rights, are deeply polarizing topics in Poland and have become key political weapons.¹² Poland maintains one of Europe's most restrictive abortion laws, permitting the procedure only in cases of rape or if the pregnancy poses a threat to the woman's life or health.¹² The Tusk government has attempted to liberalize this law, with legislative proposals aiming to decriminalize assistance in obtaining an abortion. However, these efforts have been met with significant resistance.⁴

The political stalemate on these issues is a desired outcome for the national-conservative camp, as it reinforces their ideological stance and helps to mobilize their base.¹² The presidential veto power makes it nearly impossible for the government to pass any progressive social legislation, a reality that became clear with President Duda's actions and is expected to continue with President Nawrocki.⁴ This is further complicated by internal opposition within the government coalition itself; the Polish People's Party (PSL), for instance, opposes the liberalization of both abortion and civil partnerships.¹² As a result, these issues are unlikely to be resolved through legislation and will remain a perpetual source of political conflict, used by the opposition to define the political battlefield and galvanize its conservative supporters ahead of future elections.

4.3 Social Welfare and Demographic Policy: The "800+" Program and its Future

The "800+ Programme" is a cornerstone of Poland's social welfare system, providing a monthly financial benefit of 800 PLN (approximately US\$220) for each child under the age of 18.²³ Originally launched as the "Family 500+" program, it was a flagship policy of the PiS government intended to stimulate the birth rate and reduce child poverty.²⁴ While the program has been successful in reducing extreme poverty and improving the material conditions of families with children, it has also faced criticism for being universally applied regardless of income, which benefits the wealthy and constitutes a high budgetary cost (1.7% of GDP).²⁵

The Tusk government is now actively debating potential changes to the program, particularly concerning its extension to Ukrainian refugees who received temporary protection status after 24 February 2022.²⁴ A growing number of Poles, as supported by a public poll, believe the payments should be limited to working parents, with supporters of the change arguing that the payments should stimulate labor market activity rather than create dependency.²⁴ The government is considering a bill that would tie the "800+" allowance for non-EU foreigners to the applicant's activity in the labor market and their children's attendance at Polish schools, a policy Finance Minister Andrzej Domański says is aimed at "sealing the system" and fighting abuses.²⁷ This reveals a subtle but significant policy shift, moving from a universal benefit model to one rooted in economic pragmatism and fiscal responsibility.

4.4 The Economic Strategy of the Tusk Government

The Tusk government has articulated a clear economic development strategy for 2025, titled "Poland. A Year of Breakthrough," which is based on six core pillars: investment in science and innovation, energy transformation, modern technologies, the development of transport infrastructure, a dynamic capital market, and business deregulation.¹⁶ The government has set a record-breaking investment target of up to PLN 700 billion for the year, a figure that is achievable due to the unlocking of over 50 billion EUR from the EU's National Recovery Plan.¹⁶

The primary economic goal of the Tusk government is to re-integrate Poland with the EU economy by leveraging these funds.¹⁷ The unlocking of these funds is a direct result of the government's promise to restore the rule of law. This creates a powerful feedback loop: political action (improving relations with the EU) has a direct and significant economic consequence (unfreezing funds), which in turn fuels a projected rebound in fixed investment

and drives economic growth in 2025 and 2026.²⁹ The government's focus on deregulation and simplifying administrative processes for businesses further aims to attract investment and foster a more competitive economy.¹⁶ This causal link between political choices and economic outcomes suggests that Poland's current economic success is inextricably tied to its government's ability to navigate its institutional relationship with the European Union.

5. Foreign Policy and International Relations

5.1 Poland and the European Union: From Confrontation to Re-engagement?

Poland's relationship with the European Union has evolved significantly since its accession on 1 May 2004.³² Following a period of political tension under the previous PiS government, the Tusk administration came to power in 2023 with a clear agenda of re-engagement.⁵ Its commitment to judicial reforms and participation in EU initiatives signaled a new, constructive approach.⁶

However, the election of President Nawrocki, who campaigned on an antagonistic narrative of the EU as a threat to Polish sovereignty, creates a dual-track foreign policy.⁷ While the Tusk government continues its efforts to position Poland as a constructive partner, the president's rhetoric and actions could send mixed signals to Brussels and other member states. This institutional split on foreign policy mirrors the domestic cohabitation dynamic, making Poland's position within the bloc less predictable than it would be under a unified government. Nawrocki's campaign, which also criticized the EU's European Green Deal and the Pact on Migration and Asylum, indicates a potential for continued friction on key policy areas.⁴

5.2 The Unwavering Transatlantic Alliance: NATO, the US, and the New Political Dynamic

Since the collapse of communism, Poland has cultivated a strong and consistent pro-American stance, positioning itself as a "stalwart ally" and "strategic frontline partner" of

the United States.⁵ This alliance is founded on a shared recognition of geopolitical threats, particularly from Russia. Poland has been a leading voice in calls for NATO members to increase their defense spending, and has itself raised its defense budget to 4.1% of its GDP—the highest in NATO.⁴

The election of President Nawrocki introduces a new dynamic into this relationship. While both the Tusk government and the Nawrocki presidency recognize the strategic importance of the United States, they have different political affinities in Washington.⁹ Tusk and his Foreign Minister, Radosław Sikorski, are well-known and respected by the traditional foreign policy establishment in the US.⁸ In contrast, Nawrocki's pro-Trump leanings and his meeting with the former president before the election create a separate channel of communication and influence with the "MAGA world".³ This bifurcation could either be an asset, allowing Poland to engage with a wider range of political factions in the US, or a liability, if the two Polish executive branches publicly contradict each other on key policy issues, particularly if US foreign policy becomes more isolationist.

5.3 The Strategic Partnership with Ukraine: Continuity and Contested Futures

Poland has been a leader in Europe and NATO in its support for Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022.⁴ It has served as the main logistics and transit hub for international assistance and has taken in approximately 1 million refugees.⁵ The Tusk government has continued this policy, announcing a new Poland-Ukraine security agreement in July 2024.⁴

However, the election of President Nawrocki has introduced a significant contradiction into this strategic partnership. While Nawrocki views Russia as "a post-imperial, neo-communist state" and supports continued strategic aid to Ukraine, he has indicated he would not support Ukraine's accession to NATO or the EU.⁴ This ideological position, which aligns with the demands of the far-right voters who supported him, undermines the long-term, pro-Western vision for Ukraine's future.³ This may create a paradox where Poland is a key logistical and military ally to Ukraine in the short term, but also a key political obstacle to its full integration with the West in the long term. This suggests a move from a unified, strategic partnership to one based on immediate security needs, which could create friction with Kyiv and other Western allies.

6. The Economic Impact of Political Dynamics

6.1 Economic Resilience Amidst Political Uncertainty

Despite the significant political and institutional friction in Poland, the economy remains remarkably resilient. Economic growth is projected to be robust in 2025 and 2026, with real GDP expected to increase by 3.2% to 3.3%.²⁹ Private consumption, underpinned by rising real wages and increased government spending on family benefits, is the primary driver of this growth.³⁰ Inflation, which had been a concern, is forecast to ease gradually in 2025 and 2026.³⁰

The resilience of the economy, in a context of significant political turmoil, suggests that markets and investors have a high degree of confidence in Poland's underlying economic fundamentals. These fundamentals include a well-diversified economic structure, integration into regional value chains, and a sound financial sector.³¹ Investors remain upbeat, viewing the political conflict as a contained institutional struggle between the government and the presidency rather than a systemic risk to the broader economy.²⁸

6.2 Investment and Growth: The Role of EU Funds and Government Policy

A key factor driving Poland's positive economic outlook is the government's ability to leverage European Union funds. After being frozen due to rule-of-law concerns under the previous administration, significant portions of EU funds, including the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and cohesion funds, have been unlocked and are being channeled into public investment projects.¹⁶ The government's "Poland. A Year of Breakthrough" plan aims for a record-breaking investment value of up to PLN 700 billion in 2025, which is heavily reliant on the disbursement of these funds.¹⁶

A significant paradox of the current political cohabitation is that while President Nawrocki's veto power creates domestic legislative gridlock, it does not directly affect the Tusk government's ability to absorb and deploy these EU funds. The funds were unlocked due to the government's *promise* of judicial reform and its policy of re-engagement with Brussels, not the passage of specific legislation.¹⁷ As long as the government maintains its pro-EU stance, the funds will continue to flow, providing a powerful economic tool that the presidency cannot block. This creates a situation where the government can deliver on its economic

promises, which are highly visible and popular, even while its social and judicial agenda is stalled, an asymmetry in power that could be a defining feature of this political era.

Table 3: Poland's Economic Forecasts (2025-2026)

Indicator	Forecast for 2025	Forecast for 2026	Source
Real GDP Growth	3.2-3.3%	3.0%	European Commission, ING, World Bank ²⁹
HICP Inflation	3.6%	2.8%	European Commission ³⁰
Unemployment Rate	2.8%	2.8%	European Commission ³⁰

6.3 The Fiscal Challenge: High Deficits and Structural Spending

Despite the positive growth forecasts, Poland faces a significant fiscal challenge. The country's fiscal deficit exceeded 6% of GDP in 2024 and is projected to remain high in 2025, primarily due to large defense spending and the fulfillment of election promises, including social programs.³¹ A significant portion of the government's revenues is pre-committed to non-discretionary spending on debt service, defense, and social programs, which significantly reduces its fiscal flexibility.³⁵

The political cohabitation now exacerbates this problem by making fiscal reform nearly impossible. The institutional tensions between the government and the presidency reduce the likelihood of consensus on meaningful fiscal reforms, such as spending cuts or tax increases.³⁵ The president, representing the national-conservative camp, is a defender of the previous government's populist social spending, while the high defense budget is a bipartisan priority given the geopolitical situation.³¹ This political gridlock means that the deficit problem is likely to persist, potentially becoming a long-term structural challenge to the economy, despite its otherwise strong growth fundamentals.

7. Conclusion and Outlook

7.1 Synthesizing the Key Findings

The state of Polish politics in 2025 is defined by a fundamental institutional conflict: a government and a presidency from opposing political camps. The victory of President Karol Nawrocki in the 2025 election confirmed that Poland's deep political polarization is not only persistent but is hardening. This has resulted in a legislative paralysis where the government's core agendas—on judicial reform, social issues, and EU re-engagement—are blocked by the presidential veto. The Tusk government's efforts to govern are therefore constrained, and the political battle has shifted from a policy debate to a struggle for institutional power.

Despite this political friction, the Polish economy demonstrates a remarkable level of resilience. Buoyed by robust domestic consumption and the strategic influx of EU funds, the economy is projected to experience strong growth and moderate inflation. This disconnect between the political and economic realities suggests that the market has confidence in Poland's underlying fundamentals and the government's ability to leverage EU funding, a powerful economic tool that remains accessible regardless of the institutional conflict.

In foreign policy, the new executive division creates a dual-track approach. The Tusk government's pro-EU and pro-Ukraine stance is now accompanied by a national-conservative presidency that is Eurosceptic and pro-Trump. This could lead to mixed signals on the international stage and potential long-term friction with Western allies, particularly concerning Ukraine's integration with the West. The rise of the far-right Confederation further complicates this landscape, as its radical agenda influences mainstream conservative politics and could act as a political spoiler in future elections.

7.2 The Path Forward: Challenges and Opportunities for the 2027 Election

The current political reality sets the stage for a prolonged period of institutional stalemate leading up to the next parliamentary election, scheduled for 2027.⁷ The key challenge for the Tusk government is to find ways to govern and deliver on its promises despite the presidential veto. It will likely focus on leveraging its economic achievements—driven by EU funds—to

maintain public support while using its control of the executive branch to implement changes through regulations that do not require presidential approval.²¹

For the national-conservative opposition, the challenge is to use the presidency to effectively check the government's agenda and build momentum for a return to power. Nawrocki's presidency provides a crucial platform to rally the conservative base and frame the political debate around issues of national sovereignty, traditional values, and national security.³ The outcome of the 2027 election will depend on which side can more effectively use this two-year period of political cohabitation to their advantage. Whether the populace will become weary of the constant political friction or will continue to be mobilized by it will be the decisive factor in determining the future direction of Poland.

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